

The Eagle

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PRIZE BUTTER.

The butter which won the Higgins Cup recently at the Wisconsin dairy convention was, of course, a choice article and worthy of its distinguished honor. The grain was fine and firm, with that waxy texture which so delights the heart of every butter connoisseur. It was churned till it reached the globular state, and then the buttermilk drawn, and thoroughly washed with cold water till every trace of buttermilk disappeared, then removed to the butter-worker, salted one ounce to the pound, carefully but thoroughly worked and then packed. The noticeable point in its manufacture is the free use of water. Mr. Jenkins, of London, one of the English dairy authorities, claims that good keeping butter cannot be made if water is used. The keeping quality of this prize butter had not been tested of course, but from careful inquiry among leading dairymen we failed to find such opinions as that expressed by Secretary Jenkins, though all skilled butter-makers recognize the possible deleterious effect of too much water. Of course nothing like tepid or warm water is allowable. This prize butter was worked but once, though that was very carefully and slowly done, the cream being properly cured before churning. The practice of working but once we regard as a reform in the right direction. Butter suffers from overworking more than from any other process of manipulation. Spread the butter out thin on a worker, carefully put on the salt, slowly work it in, and pack the butter before its grain is hopelessly broken down. The salt must be thoroughly incorporated in the grain of the butter, or the butter will be marbled or colored in streaks; but too much working spoils the grain and makes the butter salty. The quantity of salt, one ounce to the pound is enough, and he is an authority in such matters. We have found that tastes differ; the west uses more salt than the east. But when all dairymen make as fine butter as that which won the prize, all reasonable people will be satisfied.—*Exchange.*

OWLS AND HAWKS VS. MICE.

The field mice are becoming a pest of such magnitude that the farmers are asking what can be done to get rid of them. The same men who were urging the legislature of Ohio to keep up the premium of fifty cents a head on hawks, and helped their boys to collect all the hawk scalps possible from their farm and neighborhood. They also asked for a premium on owl's heads, because an owl occasionally appropriates a chicken.

The rapid increase of field mice since the destruction of hawks has led some farmers to think that there is some correlation between hawks and mice. As hawks become scarce mice become abundant. But do hawks and owls catch mice? Yes. As I stood on the hill a few days since I saw a hawk light on the fence beside the clover field. In a short time he darted to the ground and came up with a mouse. In a few minutes afterwards I saw him repeat the feat, and called the attention of a neighbor to it. He reports having seen hawks catching mice several times since that, and now says he thinks hawks are of some account. He once thought they were only a curse, to eat young chickens and birds.

The Indiana Farmer reports that Fletcher Noe, the taxidermist, advertised for a few owls to stuff. He was surprised to have them pour in from all directions. Every owl opened revealed in the contents of its stomach mice in different stages of digestion. One owl had been shot before the mouse had been fairly swallowed.

Let the owls and hawks increase that the field mice may decrease, and our meadows and cornfields be rid of the mice pest.—*Cor. Ohio Farmer.*

THE AGE FOR PROFIT.

While the well-fattened two-year-old steer may often be the most profitable beef the farmer can produce, (though that is disputed) it is well understood that the very best beef comes from carcasses of greater age. Early maturity has cut down the ripening age quite rapidly within the last few years, but there is a limit to this shortening process, to pass beyond which is at the expense of quality and flavor in the product. The five-year-old hulk furnishes as good steaks as the three-year-old, and he in time, by improved feeding, is equaled by the four-year-old.

When it comes to the three-year-old there is some division of opinion, though the beef of that age is usually admitted to be first-class. But three years is considered by experts to be the quality limit. Not that two-year-old beef may not be an excellent article—not at all. It is too common, tender and all that, but it is too much of a cross between veal and beef to stand well in comparison with the flesh of the older animal. For real profit, too, without undue pampering, the three-year-old is perhaps the best grown on the farm, while it has beyond question a high standing in market. The protraction of feeding beyond three years, however, is usually to measureably increase the cost of production, without securing a corresponding gain in the market value.—*Stockman.*

A lady correspondent of the *Rural New Yorker*, speaking of relieving a choked cattle, says: "I remember that when I was a little girl our cow got choked with a potato, and father hired me to run my hand and arm down 'Bossey's' throat and pull out the potato. It was not a bit pleasant. We have a better way now. If a creature gets choked, take some cold water and a rubber syringe and squirt a stream of cold water into one of its ears. It gives the animal a surprise, and it shakes its head with a vengeance, that starts the object from its throat with a jerk. I have seen it tried lots of times, even after how-handles and brownsticks and divers other plans had been tried ineffectually, and I never knew the cold-water stream to fail on cattle or horses, or even dogs."

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